

Outage Tips for Businesses

During warm weather months, demand for electricity in Wisconsin is greater than other times of the year. Utilities plan and build the electric system to have extra capacity available so customer outages are unlikely. Because of higher electrical use, this extra capacity is smaller in warm weather months, increasing the likelihood of outages.

What can you do to help?

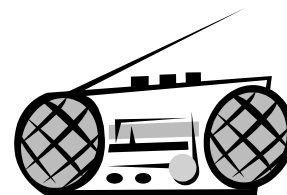
Your local utility may issue a public appeal to reduce energy use in order to prevent a power outage. Commercial establishments can help by taking the following actions during a critical period.

- Raise the thermostat setting on air conditioners 4° to 5° F.
- Keep window coverings drawn to keep the heat out.
- Turn off unnecessary office equipment (computers, printers, copiers).
- Turn off all nonessential lighting.
- Turn off nonessential equipment such as coffeepots and water coolers.
- If possible, delay any heat producing tasks, such as washing and drying laundry or dishes and utensils, until later in the day.
- If available, run back-up emergency generators to reduce utility electric demand.



What can you do to prepare for a power outage?

- Test emergency lighting systems.
- Test phone systems. If they do not operate without power, you may need a battery backup.
- Consider the impacts of an outage on fire and security systems, energy management systems, and elevators.
- Test backup generation, if available, under loaded conditions. Make sure the fuel tank is full.
- Shift load to off-peak hours (nights and weekends).
- Frequently back up any work being done on computers.
- Keep a battery-operated radio, for news and weather reports, and flashlights handy. Don't forget a fresh supply of batteries.
- Keep your staff informed.



What can you do if the power does go out?

- Turn equipment off. This will reduce the potential for damaging equipment or tripping breakers. After the electricity is restored, stagger the start of large equipment. Large equipment includes chillers, air compressors, process equipment, etc.
- Prevent refrigerated food from spoiling by keeping cooler, refrigerator, and freezer doors closed.
- Run available back-up generators.
- When power is restored, use water sparingly. The wells and/or boosters that serve your establishment may still be out of service.
- Listen to local radio channels for public announcements about power restoration.

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